



Afternoon Alert - Monday, August 7, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most broadcasters led with reports on powerful Typhoon Noru, which is bringing heavy rainfall to the Kansai region. TV Asahi led with a report that the mayor of Yamanashi city will be arrested today on the charge of falsifying test results to help an applicant obtain a public service job.

INTERNATIONAL

Secretary Tillerson, FM Kono confirm close cooperation

NHK reported at noon on the first meeting between Secretary of State Tillerson and Japanese Foreign Minister Kono held on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum in Manila today. The two ministers agreed that since the U.S.-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of peace and stability in the region as well as the world and that close cooperation between foreign ministers is essential, the two nations will work closely to make sure that the new UNSC sanctions resolution against North Korea is thoroughly implemented. In addition, they reportedly agreed to hold a "2+2" meeting of foreign and defense ministers at an early date in order to enhance the deterrence and response capability of the alliance and to arrange the schedule at the working level.

Foreign Minister Kono requested information on the cause of the accident involving an MV-22 Osprey in Australia and called for measures to prevent a recurrence.

The network also said the foreign ministers of the U.S., Japan, and Australia held a strategic dialogue ahead of the U.S.-Japan foreign ministers' meeting, adding that the three ministers

expressed serious concern over the situation in the South China Sea, where China is increasing its military presence, and also expressed strong opposition to China's unilateral actions that are increasing tensions in the region, including gas exploration activities in the East China Sea.

- [Abe's aide asks Iraqi PM for cooperation in acquiring oil interests](#) (Nikkei)
- [Myanmar military chief asks Japan PM to continue support](#) (Kyodo News)

AMBASSADOR

Introducing William Hagerty, the new U.S. envoy to Japan

NHK's weekly 50-minute educational program, "Sekai no ima! (The World Today)," took up William Hagerty, the new U.S. Ambassador to Japan, airing its exclusive interview with him conducted in the U.S. NHK commentator Tomoko Iwata, who interviewed the Ambassador, appeared as a "teacher" and explained that Ambassador Hagerty is from Tennessee, has four children, and is very knowledgeable about Japan as he lived in Tokyo for three years.

The program first aired an interview segment in which Ambassador Hagerty talked about Japanese culture: "One of the finest memories I have in Japan is taking my family to Gion in Kyoto. We had the most wonderful experience. We stayed at a ryokan, taking the onsen... I think my children will love this, so I'm excited to share that with them." On Japanese cuisine, the Ambassador said: "Everything in Japan is great. My children love sushi and my favorite is shabu-shabu. I also love Japanese curry rice." He also expressed his appreciation for the beauty of Japanese four seasons.

Iwata said that while it is important for an ambassador to be knowledgeable about Japan in order to serve as a "bridge" between the two nations, it is also important for an ambassador to be able to talk direct to the U.S. president. She said the Japanese government believes that President Trump views the Ambassador as an important person and that the Ambassador can speak direct with the President. On the economic front, Iwata said the Ambassador has strong economic connections with Japan as he served as the commissioner of the Energy Development Agency in Tennessee, in which Japan is the biggest investor. She explained that Ambassador Hagerty is also well-versed in economic and trade policies. On the TPP, the Ambassador was quoted as saying: "I don't think the United States will return to the TPP. The President is hoping for a bilateral deal because it's fair and effective. I think we will move forward in that direction.... There has to be some progress made this fall by the Vice President and Vice Prime Minister Aso.... I understand the significance of a multilateral trade agreement. But what we are promoting is a bilateral agreement. This will ensure mutual benefits."

Iwata said the Ambassador's remarks are not surprising as a representative of the U.S. government. However, she highlighted his comment that he "understands" the significance of a multilateral deal,

adding that although the U.S. will not return to the TPP, the Japanese government should pay attention to whether Ambassador Hagerty is able to listen to Japanese viewpoints without making the President lose face. Iwata noted that Prime Minister Abe made a rare move by sending a letter to the Ambassador congratulating him on his approval by the Senate. The reporter said this represents Japan's high expectations for Ambassador Hagerty but also a sense of caution on trade issues.

On security issues, the Ambassador was quoted as saying: "The two nations are strongly connected under the alliance. North Korea is a serious threat. We will work closely with Japan and deal with it. China can play a major role in containing the North Korean threat. Together with Japan, we will urge China to apply maximum pressure on North Korea. The President said all options are on the table, but we will first continue to apply diplomatic pressure and closely monitor the situation.... The United States is aware that the Senkaku Islands are under administrative control of Japan and fall under the scope of Article 5 of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. We are going to prevent any actions by China." Noting that North Korean threat has become a real threat for the U.S., Iwata said the role of the Ambassador has become more important.

Ambassador Hagerty sends message on 30th anniversary of JET program

Mainichi posted a Kyodo report on its website saying that an alumni event to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program was held in Washington on Aug. 4. More than 66,000 people from 67 nations have participated in the program since its launch in 1987, and half of them are Americans. According to the report, William Hagerty, who will take up the post of ambassador to Japan in the near future, sent a congratulatory message saying that he expects the program alumni to play a role in cementing ties between the U.S. and Japan.

POLITICS

Key ministers express resolve to implement Abe administration's policies

NHK aired separate interviews with key cabinet ministers. Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga stressed that the new cabinet will strive to achieve its policy goals by humbly listening to the voices of the Japanese people. He stressed the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance in responding to North Korea and other security issues. The cabinet spokesman also commented on Futenma relocation by expressing Tokyo's hope that the Okinawa Prefectural Government will respect the Supreme Court's ruling against its rescindment of the landfill permit for FRF construction. Concerning the accident involving an Okinawa-based Osprey off Australia on Saturday, Suga said that the GOJ will ask the U.S. to investigate the cause.

Defense Minister Onodera stressed the need for Japan to carefully review whether the nation's current missile defense capabilities are sufficient to deal with provocations by North Korea. Concerning the envisaged U.S.-Japan 2+2 meeting of defense and foreign ministers, Onodera expressed Japan's hope to hold it as soon as possible. The defense minister commented on the

Osprey accident in Australia by saying that Japan has already asked the U.S. to provide information about the accident and will urge Washington to ensure the safety of the aircraft.

Education Minister Hayashi stated that he will make efforts to restore the public trust in the ministry that was lost due to the recent scandal involving Kake Gakuen.

NHK also interviewed Economic Revitalization Minister Motegi and Internal Affairs Minister Noda. Both expressed their readiness to steadily implement the policies of the Abe administration.

- [Gist of PM Abe's press conference](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Onodera vows to step up pressure on N. Korea](#) (The Japan News)
- [Defense Minister Onodera indicates difficulty of Futenma suspension within five years](#) (Ryukyu Shimpō)
- [Farm Minister Saito expects Japan-EU EPA to open doors to more exports](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Abe says consumption tax will be raised to 10% "as scheduled"](#) (Asahi)
- [Former SDF officer to be picked as state minister for foreign affairs](#) (Nikkei)
- [Wakasa expresses intention to hold talks with Hosono](#) (Sankei)
- [Editorial: Will rise in Cabinet approval rate turn tide for Abe administration?](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Abe's new cabinet should uphold Constitution](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Abe govt must return to basic goal of prioritizing economy](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Abe reshuffles Cabinet out of desperation, must change political approach](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Cartoon: A cabinet that rekindles public enthusiasm?](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Aug. 6](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Aug. 5](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Aug. 4](#) (Nikkei)

ECONOMY

- [Japan mulls anti-dumping duty on Chinese PET plastic](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Wholesale prices of U.S. poultry up 25% on year in Japan](#) (Nikkei)
- [More seek slice of Japan's \\$27bn reactor shutdown efforts](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [FOCUS: Threat of losing EV market pushes Toyota, Mazda to capital tie-up](#) (Kyodo News)

SCIENCE

- [Japan firms to mass-produce blood-clotting treatment from stem cells](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Canon Electronics-led team hopes to develop low-cost rocket](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

SOCIETY

Hiroshima 72 years later

"NHK Special" used "big data" to analyze the records of about 560,000 hibakusha that have been preserved by the Hiroshima city government from August 6, 1945, to today. The program looked into how people died as a result of the atomic bombing, saying that while many of them were burned to death, others who survived the first day died later of severe burns, infections, and radiation sickness. A doctor said: "It causes great suffering in every aspect. Perhaps the impact of this bomb in inflicting suffering on ordinary people is greater than its military purpose. I don't think there is any other bomb that can inflict such prolonged suffering on human beings."

- [Japan's localities relying more on foreign workers](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Gov't eyes submitting bill to Diet in fall to lower age of adulthood](#) (Kyodo News)

OPINION POLLS

- [Cabinet approval rating rises to 42% but is still lower than disapproval, Yomiuri spot poll](#) (Yomiuri)
- [54% of cabinet nonsupporters say "prime minister is untrustworthy," Yomiuri spot poll](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Opinion poll & results from Yomiuri Shimbun](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Cabinet shakeup stanches bleeding for embattled Abe as support rate rises to 42%, Nikkei spot poll](#) (Nikkei)

SECURITY

Osprey takes off from Futenma despite Japan's request for flight suspension

The evening editions of Asahi, Mainichi, and Yomiuri front-paged reports saying that the Okinawa Defense Bureau disclosed that an MV-22 Osprey took off from MCAS Futenma this morning. Asahi said the disclosure came directly after DM Onodera called on the U.S. to suspend Osprey flights in Japan following the accident off Australia on Saturday. According to Asahi, Okinawa Defense Bureau chief Nakajima explained to Ginowan Mayor Sakima that the bureau confirmed that an Osprey took off from the base at about 10:40 a.m. today. Nakajima reportedly said that the U.S. military explained that it confirmed the safety of the aircraft before the flight. Mayor Sakima reportedly protested by saying: "We want the U.S. to fully suspend flights at a time like this. We want it to stand with the citizens."

Anti-Osprey rally held in Hokkaido

Asahi's Hokkaido edition reported on a rally held in Chitose, Hokkaido, on Sunday to protest against the planned participation of six Ospreys in a joint U.S.-Japan military exercise to be held on Aug. 10-28 in the area. The participants expressed their opposition following the accident involving an Okinawa-based MV-22 in Australia by saying that it is outrageous to conduct an exercise involving the aircraft. About 80 protesters participated in the rally.

- [Editorial: Further ease base-hosting burden after aircraft transfer to Iwakuni](#) (The Japan News)



Okinawa reacts strongly to Osprey crash off Australia

Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo reported extensively on Sunday and Monday on an Okinawa-based MV-22 Osprey's crash off Australia on Saturday, saying that the people of Okinawa expressed anger and concern about the safety of the aircraft. Okinawa Times quoted Nago Mayor Inamine as saying: "We are worried that an aircraft could fall on us anytime." The papers also highlighted remarks made on Sunday by Defense Minister Onodera, during which he disclosed that Japan has called on the U.S. to suspend Osprey flights in Japan.